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Set before you life and death Pt 2 The biblical view

In our previous study we set the world view of life and death, and established – (i) for the heathen life is solely physical and measured by – a) what they possess, and b) what they do (their play time), and (ii) for the heathen death is solely physical. This week we set before you life and death for the Christian, and establish – (i) for the Christian – life is spiritual and is measured by – a) our obedience to God and His blessing, b) our suffering for Christ, and (ii) for the Christian death as set before Israel (cursing) is God’s chastisement for disobedience.

Scriptures upon which this teaching is founded.

1. We set before you today – life and death.

“I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live” (Deut.30: 19).

i) For the Christian – life is spiritual and measured by

a) our obedience to God and His blessing

“A blessing, if ye obey the commandments of the Lord your God, which I command you this day” (Deut.11:27) – c.f. – Deut.30: 20 “That thou mayest love the Lord thy God, and...obey his voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto him: for he is thy life, and the length of thy days”.

There is only one occurrence of the word “success” in Josh.1: 8 and it pertains to Israel but is also applicable to us today, where Christians are blessed for obedience.

b) our suffering for Christ

“Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ” (Phil.3: 8).

The word “possessing” occurs once – we can have nothing yet “possessing all thing” (2Cor 6:10).

ii) For the Christian – death as presented in the law (cursing) occurs for disobedience to God

“And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him” (Heb.12: 5).

In the New Testament for those who refuse to repent from their sin their wages will be “death”, and just as death did not mean physical death in the grave, it can mean God’s chastisement or an early death (see the example in 1 Cor.5: 1– 5, where a man had his father’s wife), but still saved.

An illustration to help apply the teaching to our life today.

William Carey’s life found fulfilment in the mission field – taking his wife and family to Calcutta in 1793 where he set up schools and translated the scriptures in the local languages.

Question to think about.

How can giving up all things, and taking your wife and family to Calcutta be a life that is fulfilling?

Our answer from the scriptures.

* Only when we live out the scriptures in our lives, when we have set our “affection on things above, not on things on the earth” (Col 3:2), and know “both how to be abased”, and “how to abound...and to suffer need” (Phil.4: 12).

* Only when we live our lives with the knowledge that the Father will fulfil His promise which He promised before the world began – “the hope of eternal life” (Tit.1: 2) that we have in Christ, where the likes of William Carey and others who give up their success and their possessions to serve and suffer for Christ will receive a reward for their labours (“1Cor 3:14).

If obedience to Christ sees you join the mission-field then your **joy** on earth is serving Christ and taking your family to Calcutta is a fulfilling life. Therefore, the biblical view of life and death that we set before the you, is – to live is obedience to God’s word, and you will receive His blessing and death is disobedience to God’s word, and you will receive consequences for sin. Let us choose life!